

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66610

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APPROVED BY: NEA/CYP-DTDBOYATT

NEA-MR CRAIG

S/S-O:KKURZE

DISTRIBUTION: NONE INDICATED

----- 119897

R 292234Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

S E C R E T STATE 234518

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATENS 8232 ACTION SECSTATE 25 NOV

QUOTE

S E C R E T ATHENS 8232

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, GR

SUBJECT: FALL OF PAPADOPOULOS

1. PAPADOPOULOS FELL BECAUSE HE WAS BASICALLY
UNABLE TO PUT INTO CONCRETE REALITY THE COUP OF 1967. EVEN
SIX YEARS IN POWER WERE INSUFFICIENT TO INSPIRE HIM WITH
A VIABLE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL PROGRAM, OR WITH THE
REQUISITE POPULAR SUPPORT. HE WANTED DEMOCRACY BUT WITH
CONTROL AND ORDER. HE NEVER FULLY APPRECIATED THAT PUBLIC
SUPPORT, CLEAR IDEAS AND EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
WERE ESSENTIAL TO HIS EFFORTS TO CONCEIVE AND MAKE A REALITY
OF HIS DREAMS FOR GREECE.

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2. IN SOME RESPECTS PAPADOPOULOS' GREATEST WEAKNESS WAS HIS
INDECISIVENESS. HE AVOIDED CONFRONTATION AT ALMOST ANY COST.
EVEN WHEN HE KNEW THAT GENERAL IOANNIDES POSED A GRAVE THREAT
TO HIS FUTURE HE HESITATED, AND REFUSED TO TAKE WHAT SEEMED

TO BE INEVITABLE STEPS TO CONFRONT AND ELIMINATE IOANNIDES FROM THE ATHENS SCENE.

3. PAPADOPOULOS FACED INCREASING PROBLEMS STEMMING FROM THE NATURAL EROSION TO HIS POWER AFTER SIX YEARS IN OFFICE, THE GROWING COMPLEXITY OF HIS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, AND THE ACCELERATING DEMANDS AND PRESSURES OF THE GREEK STUDENTS AND GREEK PEOPLE FOR FREEDOM. THE NAVY MUTINY ONLY HIGHLIGHTED AND BROUGHT TO A FOCUS HIS DESPERATE POSITION. BY WHAT APPEARED TO BE A BRILLIANT COUP DE THEATRE, HE PROCLAIMED THE REPUBLIC, PROMISED ELECTIONS, AND ISSUED A GENERAL AMNESTY. HE THEN CREATED A NEW AND MORE HOPEFUL ATMOSPHERE. MARKEZINIS BOOSTED THIS PUBLIC POSTURE WITH EARNEST SUPPORT OF PAPADOPOULOS' EFFORTS TO RETURN GREECE TO POLITICAL "NORMALCY".

4. BUT TWO FATEFUL ELEMENTS INTERPOSED THEMSELVES. EVEN IF PAPADOPOULOS WAS SINCERE, HE WAS UNABLE TO SWAY THE OLD POLITICAL WORLD. THEIR FAILURE TO RESPOND WAS BOTH TRAGIC AND INDICATIVE THAT THE GREEK CHARACTER HAD NOT LOST THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF TRAGEDY WHICH HAVE PLAGUED THESE PEOPLE SINCE THE DAYS OF PERICLES. THEY PREFERRED TO RISK DESTRUCTION RATHER THAN COOPERATE WITH A MAN THEY HATED. THEIR HATRED WAS TO THE MOST VENOMOUS FORM. IN ADDITION, THE PEOPLE WERE MOST SKEPTICAL. THEY DID NOT BELIEVE IN PAPADOPOULOS' PROMISES. INFLATION, ISSUES OF CORRUPTION, NEPOTISM, POOR ADMINISTRATION AND THE PROBLEMS OF MAKING ENDS MEET A HIGHER LEVEL OF EXPECTATIONS MADE RECEPTION OF THE PAPADOPOULOS-MARKEZINIS PROGRAM DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT.

5. THE MATTER WAS BROUGHT TO AN EXPLOSIVE POINT BY THE STUDENT OUTBREAK, THE VIOLENT ELEMENTS WHICH ASSOCIATED WITH IT, AND THE DEATHS WHICH RESULTED. THE MEMORIES WHICH THIS VIOLENCE EVOKED, COMBINED WITH THE STUDENT SLOGANS OF THE TRAGIC CIVIL WAR OF THE 40'S, PROVIDED THE CATAclySTIC FACTOR EXPLODING PAPADOPOULOS OUT OF POWER.

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6. THE US APPARENTLY NOW FACES A BASICALLY HARDLINER JUNTA EFFORT TO RESTORE THE PRISTINE NATURE OF THE 1967 COUP. THERE IS MUCH LESS CHANCE OF POPULAR SUPPORT, AND A MUCH GREATER POSSIBILITY OF POLARIZATION WITH VIOLENCE. WHAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS IS MORE FREEDOM AND MORE STEAM LETTING, NOT REPRESSION. IOANNIDES IS A HARDLINER WHO, WITH HIS MILITARY POLICE, HAS HAD MUCH TO DO WITH THE IMAGE OF TORTURE AND TOUGHNESS FOR WHICH THE PAPADOPOULOS REGIME HAS SUFFERED.

7. THIS "JUNTA" HAS TO FACE ALL THE SAME PROBLEMS OF FREEDOM, ORDER, ECONOMIC STABILITY AND GROWTH. YET, ACCORDING TO OUR EARLY INFORMATION, IT HAS LESS CAPABILITY IN THE KINDS OF PEOPLE LIKELY TO MAN IT. THEY ARE VERY LIKELY TO FAIL BECAUSE THEY COMPLETELY UNDERRATE THE PROBLEMS OF DOMESTIC

AND FOREIGN POLICY PRESENTLY FACING THE COUNTRY. A SIMPLISTIC MILITARY APPROACH TO THESE PROBLEMS WILL LIKELY LEAD TO POLARIZATION, VIOLENCE AND REPRESSION.

8. AS FOR OUR VITAL INTERESTS IN THIS COUNTRY, THESE NEW SELF APPOINTED LEADERS ARE ALL TO BE CLASSED AS "PRO-AMERICAN". THEY HAVE NO PLACE TO GO EXCEPT IN HARMONY WITH OUR SECURITY INTERESTS, E.G., THREE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES TO THE NORTH, TURKEY TO THE EAST, AND THE SOVIET FLEET IN MASS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. ALSO, GREECE IS RUNNING A \$600 MILLION PAYMENTS SURPLUS WITH THE UNITED STATES. JUST AS I BELIEVE WE SHOULD HAVE GIVEN ALL POSSIBLE SUPPORT TO THE PAPADOPOULOS-MARKEZINIS EFFORT TO HOLD "IRREPROACHABLE" ELECTIONS, SO I BELIEVE WE SHOULD MAKE OUR POSITION CRYSTAL CLEAR TO THE NEW MILITARY COUP D'ETATISTS IN THE MATTER OF DEMOCRACY AND FREE ELECTIONS. IT IS VITAL THAT IOANNIDES UNDERSTAND THE IMPERATIVES OF POLITICAL STABILITY IN GREECE-THAT THIS IS THE CRITICAL ELEMENT IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, AS WELL AS THE COHESIVENESS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE. ON THIS SUBJECT I HAVE TRANSMITTED A SEPARATE MESSAGE SUGGESTING APPROPRIATE AND USEFUL ACTION ON OUR PART AT THIS TIME.
TASCA UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, POLITICAL STABILITY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE234518
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/VYP:RWERDMAN:MJB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750023-1979
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731167/abqcekac.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11-Oct-2001 by rowellE0>; APPROVED <15-Nov-2001 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FALL OF PAPADOPOULOS
TAGS: PINS, GR, (PAPADOPOULOS)
To: NICOSIA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005